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**Testimony in Support of Assembly Bill 382
Assembly Committee for Veterans & Military Affairs
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Thank you, fellow committee members.

I was pleased to author AB 382 at the request of the Wisconsin County Veterans Service Office Association and Wisconsin veterans.

The purpose of this legislation is to allow disabled veterans receiving VA pension benefits to purchase a reduced-fee fishing license at the price of \$7.00.

Currently, Wisconsin allows for reduced-fee fishing licenses to several categories of disabled citizens, including those receiving Social Security Disability, Supplemental Security Income, Railroad Retirement Disability benefits, or Veteran's disability compensation for a service related disability of 70% or more. Through an oversight, veterans who receive non-service connected disability pension benefits were omitted from this benefit.

Veterans who receive disability pension have been declared permanently and totally disabled by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Certainly this group should be considered with parity as those declared disabled by the Social Security Administration.

In order to receive a reduced-fee fishing license, a disabled veteran must present evidence that he or she receives federal pension benefits for a disability that is not related to his or her military service. Acceptable evidence includes a notice from the Veterans Administration which indicates that the individual is receiving VA pension benefits.

The bill does not change current law under which a veteran who receives federal benefits for a service-related disability may receive an annual fishing license at a further reduced fee (\$3.00). Our goal is to see veterans who are in receipt of VA pension have parity with citizens in receipt of Social Security Disability benefits.

Again, it's important to the veterans community that we correct this oversight and extend this benefit to veterans declared disabled by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Thank you for hearing this testimony.